

[Rollcall Vote No. 23 Ex.]

YEAS—86

Akaka	Enzi	Murkowski
Alexander	Feinstein	Murray
Ayotte	Franken	Nelson (NE)
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Nelson (FL)
Baucus	Graham	Paul
Begich	Grassley	Pryor
Bennet	Hagan	Reed
Bingaman	Hatch	Reid
Blumenthal	Heller	Risch
Blunt	Hoeben	Roberts
Boozman	Hutchison	Rockefeller
Boxer	Isakson	Rubio
Brown (MA)	Johanns	Sanders
Brown (OH)	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Burr	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Cantwell	Kerry	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shelby
Carper	Kohl	Snowe
Casey	Kyl	Tester
Chambliss	Leahy	Thune
Coats	Levin	Toomey
Cochran	Lieberman	Udall (CO)
Collins	Lugar	Udall (NM)
Conrad	Manchin	Warner
Coons	McConnell	Webb
Corker	Menendez	Whitehouse
Cornyn	Merkley	Wicker
Crapo	Mikulski	Wyden
Durbin	Moran	

NAYS—2

DeMint Lee

NOT VOTING—12

Coburn	Kirk	McCaskill
Harkin	Landrieu	Portman
Inhofe	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Inouye	McCain	Vitter

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). Under the previous order, a motion to reconsider is considered made and laid on the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate shall resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be a period of morning business up to 60 minutes, equally divided and controlled by Senators PRYOR and ALEXANDER.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator PRYOR and I and designated Senators be allowed to speak in a colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MAKING THE SENATE WORK

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, some of the Senators on the Republican side have other appointments to make, so I am going to defer my remarks until the end of the colloquy.

What I will do is first state why we are here; second, go to Senator ISAKSON, then we will go to Senator PRYOR, and then back to Senator COLLINS, if we may.

Madam President, our leaders—the Democratic leader, the majority leader and the Republican leader—sometimes get criticized. They have hard jobs, and we recognize that. We also recognize

that they can't do their jobs unless we do our jobs well. So tonight what some of us thought we would do, on the Democratic side and the Republican side, is apply a management principle that is called "catching people doing things right."

We believe the majority leader and the minority leader, Senator INOUE, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and Senator COCHRAN, the ranking member, are doing things exactly right when they say it is their intention to try to move all 12 of our appropriations bills through the Appropriations Committee and get them to the floor so we can deal with them before the next fiscal year starts. We are here not just to compliment them but to pledge to them our support in helping them achieve that goal.

There are many important reasons we should do that, but basically it is our constitutional responsibility to appropriate money. It is a time when we need to save every penny we can. This is our best opportunity for oversight, and it is also good management, and it allows the Senate to do what the Senate ought to do, which is consider legislation, have a hearing, ask questions, cut out what ought to be cut out, add what ought to be added, vote on it, bring it to the floor, amend it, debate on it, and pass it or defeat it. That is what we should be doing. Only twice since 2000 has this Senate actually considered every single one of the 12 appropriations bills. Only twice, in 2001 and 2005. So it has been 7 years since we considered every single one of the appropriation bills, which is our most basic responsibility: appropriate and oversight.

That is why we are here tonight. Our leaders have said this is what their intention is. We are here to say: You are right. Congratulations. We compliment you, and we are here to help you succeed. Because it is very difficult for our leaders to succeed if they don't have any followers making it possible for them to achieve their goals.

I would defer to Senator ISAKSON and then to Senator PRYOR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. I thank Senator ALEXANDER for giving me a moment on the floor.

It is ironic that when I received the call last week asking if I would participate in this colloquy, I was traveling my State doing townhall meetings. I was near Ooltewah, TN, on Thursday night, north of Dalton, GA, and Murray County. We had a townhall meeting, and this fellow in the back of the room raised his hand when it came time for questions.

He said: Mr. ISAKSON, I have got a question for you. I said: What is that? He said: Last night, my wife and I amended our budget that we established in December for this year because some things have not gone so well, and we had to recast how we are spending our money so we wouldn't go

any further in debt than we already are. Why can't you all do the same thing? "You all," talking about us.

A few days earlier in Dublin, GA, a great, prosperous town in south Georgia, a similar question was asked by a Chamber of Commerce director who couldn't understand why the Federal Government and the Congress of the United States could not wrap their arms around fiscal responsibility, have a budget, and have appropriations acts that come to the floor, are debated, are amended, and the spending of the United States of America's government is spent like the households of the United States of America have to spend their money.

So I commend Senator ALEXANDER and Senator PRYOR for bringing this to the floor, and I want to commend our leaders for making affirmative statements about the desire to bring the 12 appropriations bills to the floor of the Senate, debate them, let us amend them, and let us bring them together.

If you think about it, in the last 3 years we have had a situation where we either had continuing resolutions or omnibus appropriations. During a difficult period of time where we have had deficits of \$1.3 trillion to \$1.5 trillion, we haven't taken the time to debate how we are spending our money, where we are spending our money, and doing it in the context of what we call on the floor regular order. In fact, it is not hard to understand why only 11 percent of the American people view the Congress as favorable, because they can't understand our inability to do what they have to do themselves. The IRS doesn't take excuses on April 15 if you are not ready. You have got to be ready. If you are a business and you file as an LLC or a sub S corporation, on the 15th of January, the 15th of April, the 15th of June, and the 15th of September, you file a quarterly tax return; and if you don't, you are held accountable.

We are now going into our fourth year, and it looks as though for the first time in the last 3 years we are going to have debate on the floor of how we spend the American people's money. I commend Senator ALEXANDER and Senator PRYOR, and I thank our leadership for making the statement of the desire to do so. I have already seen Senator INOUE and I have already seen Senator COCHRAN working diligently in the basic appropriations subcommittees to see to it that those bills come to the floor. I think it is time we do our business just as the American people do their business, and I commend Senator ALEXANDER and Senator PRYOR for calling for this colloquy tonight.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, since we have other Senators on the floor, what I would like to do is withhold my comments until a few of our other colleagues have a chance to speak, if that would be permissible to Senator ALEXANDER?